

United States Mint Releases Designs for Chief Justice John Marshall Silver Dollar

February 10, 2005

Washington — The United States Mint today released the designs for the commemorative silver dollar commemorating the 250th anniversary of the birth of Chief Justice John Marshall. The Chief Justice John Marshall Silver Dollar pays tribute to his service to the Supreme Court of the United States and to our Nation.

The obverse design is an image of Chief Justice John Marshall based on a profile portrait by Charles de Saint-Memim, and the reverse design features an interior view of the old Supreme Court chamber in which John Marshall served as Chief Justice. The obverse was executed by United States Mint sculptor/engraver John Mercanti and the reverse design by United States Mint sculptor/engraver Donna Weaver.

“While people all over the country are familiar with the likes of George Washington, Thomas Jefferson and Benjamin Franklin, significantly fewer know about the remarkable contributions of the fourth Chief Justice,” said current Chief Justice William H. Rehnquist in testimony before Congress. “A commemorative coin could provide an opportunity to educate all Americans about the man known as ‘the Great Chief Justice.’”

“This historic commemorative silver dollar marks the first time that any United States coin has honored a Supreme Court Justice or the United States Supreme Court,” said United States Mint Director Henrietta Holsman Fore. “This beautifully detailed coin pays tribute to both the man and the institution that is the highest court for American justice.”

Of special note to collectors, the Chief Justice John Marshall Silver Dollar Program will feature two special sets, the 2005 Heritage Collection and the Chief Justice John Marshall Coin & Chronicles Set.

Reminiscent of the Prestige Set previously issued by the United States Mint, the 2005 Heritage Collection will contain proof versions of all 2005 circulating coins, as well as a proof version of the Chief Justice John Marshall Silver Dollar.

The Chief Justice John Marshall Coin & Chronicles Set, limited to 25,000 sets, will feature an uncirculated version of the Chief Justice John Marshall Silver Dollar, an intaglio print of a statue of Chief Justice Marshall from the Bureau of Engraving and Printing, and an informative booklet about the Chief Justice prepared by the Supreme Court Historical Society. The John Marshall Commemorative Coin Act (Public Law 108-290, dated August 6, 2004) authorizes a maximum mintage of 400,000 silver dollar coins. A portion of the proceeds from sales of the commemorative coins is authorized to be paid to the Supreme Court Historical Society.

On February 4, 1801, Marshall was sworn in as Chief Justice of the United States. He was the fourth man to serve in that capacity after the Court was created in 1789. He served more than 34 years as Chief Justice.

Under Marshall’s leadership, the English practice of each Justice writing his own opinion was replaced with the Court’s speaking with one majority voice, a practice that remains to the present day. Marshall wrote the Court’s opinion in 519 of the 1,106 cases decided during his tenure — almost half. He championed the primacy of the Court through his powers of persuasion, his congenial manner and his shrewd sense of policy.

In 1803, only two years after Marshall became Chief Justice, the Court announced its opinion in *Marbury v. Madison*, asserting that the judicial branch has the authority to judge the validity of an Act of Congress and to overturn the Act if it is not in conformity with the United States Constitution. This doctrine of judicial review has become a cardinal principle of U.S. constitutional law. Marshall also authored many landmark opinions establishing the supremacy of national law and the authority of the Constitution.

The Chief Justice John Marshall Silver Dollar will be available in late April 2005 with a pre-issue price of \$35 for the proof coin and \$33 for the uncirculated coin. After the pre-issue period ends, the regular price of the proof coin will be \$39, and the regular price of the uncirculated coin will be \$35. Prices for the 2005 Heritage Collection and the Chief Justice John Marshall Coin & Chronicles Set will be announced before the official launch of these programs.

Images of the Chief Justice John Marshall Silver Dollar can be found at </learn/coin-and-medal-programs/commemorative-coin-programs>, by clicking on “Commemoratives.”

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